

WHEN CARE IS NEEDED



When individuals have trouble taking care of themselves, they may need some type of support and assistance to continue their activities. Many people can take advantage of community-based health and supportive services (e.g., homemaker, personal care and home health care services), to stay in their homes or in other non-nursing home settings.

To determine the type of care that is needed, talk to different people about care-setting choices. If you are helping someone else make this decision, involve that person in the decision making process to the extent possible.

Many people can provide advice: Your local county Aging Unit or Office on Aging, the Community Options Program (COP) within your county social services or human services department, your doctor, clergy or friends.

You should discuss:

- Your (or the person's) health care needs, physical abilities and preferences for care;
- If the person's medical condition requires a short intervention for stabilization or for a longer timeframe;
- Family or other informal support's ability to provide care;
- Available community support services; and
- Financial resources available to pay for care.

It is important to be totally honest when discussing these issues so that you get appropriate advice. An open discussion will enable you to make a decision that best addresses an individual's needs, strengths and preferences.

IF YOU DECIDE ON NURSING HOME CARE

If nursing home care is the option you are pursuing, you should ask the potential resident's physician several questions before looking for a home.



- Will he or she continue to provide services and/or treatment (and how often) after admission to the nursing home? Not all physicians will.
- Will he or she write the orders required for admission to a nursing home in Wisconsin? These orders include needed medications, treatment, therapies, activities, diet and level of care recommendations.
- What level of care does he or she anticipate the resident will need? Most people enter nursing homes needing skilled nursing care, i.e., access to 24 hour a day nursing services provided or supervised by registered nurses. Some people, however, will need more intensive or less intensive services.